Amendments to the Claims:

1.    (Previously Presented)  An asset combining both related content and data for distribution
and service implementation in a digital cable system, comprising:

      a metadata object, wherein the metadata object comprises an application identifier
identifying an application associated with processing  the asset and;

      a content object, wherein the content object represents data to be stored based
upon instructions originating from the application as a result of interpreting the metadata object
and wherein the metadata object identifies the content object.

2.    (original)  The asset of claim 1, further comprising an embedded asset, such that
the asset is recursive.

3.    (original)  The asset of claim 2, wherein the embedded asset further comprises at
least one embedded content object.

4.    (original)  The asset of claim 2, wherein the embedded asset further comprises at
least one embedded metadata object.

5.    (Previously Presented)  The asset of claim 1, wherein the content object
represents data selected from the group comprising an MPEG file, an executable file, an HTML
page, and a JPEG image.

6.    (Previously Presented)  The asset of claim 1, wherein the metadata object
identifies the content object as a movie.

7.    (Previously Presented)  The asset of claim 1, further comprising a machine
readable description identifying the metadata object and the content object.

8.    (original)  The asset of claim 7, wherein the machine readable description comprises XML.

9.    (Previously Presented)  A digital cable system that receives and delivers content and data related to the content to facilitate service implementation in a digital cable system, comprising:

a staging server that receives an asset from a content provider, wherein the asset comprises both the content and the data related to the content, the data related to the content further comprising an application identifier;

a content server storing the content and in communication with a subscriber set-top box for providing the content to the set-top box; and

an application associated with the asset identified by the application identifier to interpret the data related to the content, wherein the application identifies a server that receives the content from the staging server.

10.    (Previously Presented)  The system of claim 9, further comprising an asset management system that parses the asset to determine the application associated with the application identifier.

11.    (original)  The system of claim 10, wherein the asset management system maintains a database associating the content and the data related to the content.

12.    (original)  The system of claim 10, wherein the asset management system resides between the application and the staging server such that the staging server and application are in indirect communication.

13.    (original)  The system of claim 10, wherein the asset management system is operable to instruct the content server to request at least a portion of the content from the staging server.

14.    (previously presented)  The system of claim 9, wherein the application is operable to identify the content server based upon the data related to the content.

15.    (original)  The system of claim 9, wherein the content server receives at least a portion of the content from the staging server.

16.    (original)  The system of claim 9, wherein the content server requests the at least a portion of the content from the staging server using File Transfer Protocol (FTP).

17.    (original)  The system of claim 9, wherein the application comprises a provisioning user interface to allow a user to identify the at least one server to receive at least a portion of the content.

18.    (original)  The system of claim 17, wherein the provisioning user interface allows a user to specify rules for distributing at least a portion of the content to the content server.

19.  (Previously Presented)  A method performed at a cable system headend for distributing content and related data to facilitate service implementation in a digital cable system, comprising:

      receiving an asset, wherein the asset comprises both a machine readable description identifying content and related data wherein the related data further comprises an application identifier;

      storing the asset in a staging server;

      parsing the machine readable description to determine an application associated with the asset and identified by the related data;

      examining the related data at the application to identify the content server that should receive at least a portion of the content; and

      the application instructing the content server to retrieve the content from the staging server.

20.  (original)  The method of claim 19, further comprising the step of receiving the content from the staging server.

21.  (original)  The method of claim 20, wherein the receiving step comprises receiving the content directly from the staging server.

22.  (Previously Presented)  The method of claim 20, wherein the step of parsing the machine readable description to determine an application associated with the asset and identified by the related data comprises:

     retrieving the machine readable description from the staging server; and

     parsing the machine readable description to determine an application associated with the asset and identified by the related data.

23.    (Previously Presented)  The method of claim 20, wherein the step of examining the related data by the application further comprises the step of identifying the at least one server that should receive at least a portion of the content based upon rules defined by a user associated with the application.